



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: Monday, December 23, 2019
TO: Howard Dashiell, Mendocino County Department of Transportation
FROM: Jesse Davis, Planning and Building Services
SUBJECT: CR 233, Road E – Road Vacation 19-01/ Redwood Valley

Established by Resolution Number 84-199, enacted on September 25, 1984, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors developed procedures to facilitate the request for vacation of a County highway, right-of-way or public service easement.

Per Resolution No. 84-199, the Mendocino County Department of Planning & Building Services shall do the following:

- A) Conduct the environmental studies required by CEQA.
- B) Determine whether or not the proposed vacation is consistent with the County General Plan.
- C) Review and make a recommendation as to whether or not the County highway or public service easement proposed to be vacated is useful as a pedestrian, bicycle or equestrian trail.

On November 3, 2019, the Mendocino County Department of Transportation provided the Department of Planning & Building Services, as well County Counsel, with a road vacation petition, a map showing the proposed location, Preliminary Report showing County's ownership of the area to be vacated, as well as a legal description of the portion of Road E in Redwood Valley subject to the petition for road vacation.

Below, as required by Resolution 84-199, Planning and Building staff address the aforementioned requirements:

Environmental Review

As proposed, the project would vacate approximately .39± acres of property, which is presently demarcated as Right-of-Way per the County of Mendocino. Upon finalizing the environmental review, it was determined that the requested vacation meets the standards for a Class 12 Categorical Exemption (Surplus Government Property Sales). As a result, County Planning Staff prepared a 'Notice of Exemption' to be filed with the Mendocino County Clerk Recorder for the Department of Transportation.

Given the limited size of the property to be vacated, its existing development and surrounding improvements, it was determined that the property does not have significant value for environmental purposes. Furthermore, the property is of such size, shape, and inaccessibility that it is incapable of independent development, other than to support an existing private residential driveway encroachment onto Road E (CR #233) and property fencing. Surrounding land-uses do not appear to have changed over time. As the project is exempt from CEQA, no filing fee per Fish and Game is required.

General Plan Consistency & Active Transportation Potential

In reviewing the project for General Plan consistency and possible alternative uses of the right-of-way, staff reviewed multiple General Plan policies, as well as regional planning documents. The Redwood Valley community planning area encompasses the town of Redwood Valley and the area north of State Route 20 (SR 20) via East Road (CR# 230), approximately eight miles northeast of Ukiah. This proposed vacation would occur adjacent to Road E (CR #233), where land use is primarily agricultural with

residential *ranchettes* of 5 to 10 acres. There are also clusters of smaller residential lots. With regard to the General Plan – Community Specific Policies (Redwood Valley), no goals, policies, or actions would be directly affected by this vacation, as those area goals are primarily geared toward more effective and intensive use of the downtown core area near the intersection of East Road (CR# 230) and School Way (CR# 236).

As noted, Mendocino County is a predominantly rural county, which limits the opportunity for bikeways to serve large segments of the population. Sidewalks and pedestrian paths are similarly affected. The 2009 General Plan incorporates a wide range of approaches for addressing these transportation needs. Primary among these needs is an emphasis on multiple modes of transportation, rather than focusing solely on vehicular transportation, while stressing community livability. *Pedestrian and Bicycle Systems Policies* are identified within the General Plan as Policy DE-152 - Policy DE-159 with multiple action items incorporated, including the need to prepare a plan identifying future pedestrian and bicycle routes and their implementation (Action Item DE-153.1)

In 2019, the final Mendocino Pedestrian Needs Master Document was completed. The Mendocino County Pedestrian Needs Assessment and Engineered Feasibility Study was a project led by the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) and funded by Caltrans and MCOG. The project intends to improve sidewalks, paths, and safe crossings in Mendocino County. The report describes potential pedestrian access improvement projects identified through the review of past studies, an inventory and analysis of existing conditions for pedestrian access, agency staff input, and public input from workshops, meetings and on-line surveys. While numerous active transportation initiatives exist within the Redwood Valley Community Area, they do not conflict with the requested vacation, as those identified improvements and priorities found are focused on more highly trafficked corridors, such as East Road (CR# 230) and West Road (CR # 237), as well as the downtown-core area of Redwood Valley. This is similar to the Community Specific policies of the General Plan. Upon review and recommendation, this request would not vacate a useful or identified pedestrian, bicycle or equestrian trail identified as part of previous analysis.

Upon closer review of the subject parcel and project site, the shoulder width adjacent to the area to be vacated appears similar to other portions of Road E (CR# 233), indicating that the project would not impede any future active transportation linkages identified or pursued along that corridor.

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATION: Staff finds the project to be Class 12 Categorical Exemption (Surplus Government Property Sales) from CEQA.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY RECOMMENDATION: As proposed, the project is consistent with the Development Element of the General Plan and the Mendocino County Pedestrian Needs Assessment and Engineered Feasibility Study.

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Jesse Davis, Senior Planner

CC: Brent Schultz, Director of Planning & Building Services; Russell Ford, Planner III

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